

of the greater portion of the prominent actual character of human beings, are to be found in those moral elements through which they pass. And if one might be pardoned for putting in words so fantastic an idea, as that of its being possible for a man to live back again to his infancy, through all the scenes of his life, and to give back from his mind and character, at each time and circumstance, as he repassed it, exactly that which he took from it, when he was there before, it would be most curious to see the fragments and *exuvitz* of the moral man lying here and there along the retrograde path, and to find what he was in the beginning of this train of modifications and acquisitions. Nor can it be doubted that any man, whose native tendencies were ever so determinate, and who has passed through a course of events and interests adapted to develop and confirm them according to their determination, might, by being led through a different train, counteractive to those native tendencies, have been an extremely different man from what he now is.—I am supposing his mind to be in either case equally cultivated, and referring to another kind of difference than that which would in any case be made by the different measure or quantity, if I may express it so, of intellectual attainment.

Here a person of your age might pause, and look back with great interest on the world of circumstances through which life has been drawn. Consider what thousands of situations, appearances, incidents, persons, you have been present with, each in its time. The review would carry you over something like a chaos, with all the moral, and all other elements, confounded together; and you may reflect till you begin almost to wonder how an individual retains the same essence through all the diversities, vicissitudes, and counteractions of influence, that operate on it during its progress through the confusion. While the essential being might, however, defy the universe to extinguish, absorb, or transmute it, you will find it has come out with dispositions and habits which will show where it has been, and what it has undergone. You may descry on it the marks and colours of many of the things by which it has, in passing, been touched or arrested.

Consider the number of meetings with acquaintance, friends, or strangers; the number of conversations you have held or heard; the number of exhibitions of good or evil,